

Letter from Gardiner Greene Hubbard to Alexander Graham Bell, April 26, 1876, with transcript

Letter from Gardiner Greene Hubbard to Alexander Graham Bell. 711 14th Street, Washington, D. C. April 26th, 1876. Dear Mr. Bell:

I received your letter from Havenhill a few days ago. I was very glad to hear from you. I have as you know always had great faith in your autograph telegraph, as the thing for general use—but I understood from you last year that there was some difficulty in getting all the currents to work straight and therefore you gave it up.

I had a letter from Mrs. Hubbard yesterday in which she says you have received an offer of a Professorship at the Washington College. I think it would be a mistake for you to accept it because I fear if you were tied up to rules and hours it would be very irksome and hard—that if you were also married you would feel compelled to remain and there would thus be a constant struggle and life would go hard.

You are not like other men and you must therefore make allowance for your peculiarities. I do not mean to praise your peculiarities for they are a very great injury to you. If you could work as other men do you would accomplish much more than with your present habits. But you must overcome those habits by your own will, and not by rules imposed by a college faculty and President.

I believe there is money in your patents and that if you would take Mr. Williams' man as I proposed and work with him or let him work steady on one thing until you had perfected it you would soon make it a success. While you are flying from 2 one thing to another you may accidentally accomplish something but you probably will never perfect anything. If you did not neglect the main thing, you would have been successful long ago. If you could make one good invention in the telegraph you would secure an annual income as much

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as the Professorship and then you could settle that on your wife and teach Visible Speech and experiment in telegraphy with an easy and undisturbed conscience.

I like you so much that I want to see your life a success and it will be unless you neglect all your opportunities and talents. With my best love.

I am your friend, Gardiner G. Hubbard.